

2015

Lexington Police Department Annual Report



Submitted by:
Chief A.S. Thomas

Table of Contents

Introduction:

Message from the Chief of Police	2
Mission Statement	3
Oath of Honor	4
Community Policing	5
Department Overview / Organization	12
Employee Recognition.....	20

Law Enforcement Services and Statistics:

Crime Analysis	24
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Professional Standards:

Accreditation	26
Complaint Investigation.....	27
Use of Force	28
Budget Information	29
Notable Accomplishments.....	31



Message from the Chief of Police

At the Lexington Police Department, we focus every day on enriching the lives of our citizens by creating an exceptional environment and providing exemplary services that enable our community to thrive and prosper. I am honored to have served as the Chief of Police for the last six years.

On behalf of the men and women of the LPD, I am pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report as it is an opportunity to highlight Lexington Virginia to be one of the safest cities in the Commonwealth to live, work and raise a family. The report highlights statistical data for 2015 and provides a comparison of the same data for previous years and also provides a snapshot of accomplishments of the department, an overview of specialized activities, and other information we hope you will find useful. In 2014 Lexington was named the 8th Safest City in Virginia by *SafeWise* and in 2015 Lexington was named the 4th Safest City in Virginia and honored as one of the top 10 Cities in Virginia by *CitiesJournal*.



The police and the community share in the responsibility for crime control and public safety and as we continue to work together, everyone benefits from the partnership. We recognize the importance of community partnerships as we strive to provide quality law enforcement services during tough economic times. Our commitment to maintain these partnerships enables us to better understand the needs of citizens and provide the most efficient response.

I commend and thank the men and women of the Lexington Police Department for their outstanding achievements during the past year in providing the highest level of public safety services to all our citizens and the businesses in our community. Their hard work, innovation in problem solving, and compassion for the citizens that we serve are the reason that we achieve success in providing outstanding public safety services, year after year.

Sincerely,

Alfred S. Thomas, Jr.
Chief of Police
Lexington Police Department

THE LEXINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT'S

Mission:

The members of the Lexington Police Department are committed to providing service to all citizens in our community with respect, fairness, and compassion. We are steadfast in our efforts of prevention of crime and the protection of life and property; the preservation of peace, order and safety; the enforcement of laws and ordinances; and the safeguarding of constitutional guarantees.

With community service as part of our foundation, we are driven by goals to enhance the quality of life, investigating problems as well as incidents, seeking solutions and fostering a sense of security in communities and individuals. We nurture public trust by holding ourselves to the highest standards of performance and ethics.

To fulfill our mission, the Lexington Police Department is dedicated to providing a quality work environment and employee development through effective training and leadership.

We complete our foundation with Leadership, Pride, and Duty.



Law Enforcement

Oath of Honor

**On my honor,
I will never betray my badge,
my integrity, my character,
or the public trust.
I will always have the courage
to hold myself and others
accountable for our actions.
I will always uphold the Constitution,
the community,
and the agency I serve,
so help me God.**

Developed by the
International Association of Chiefs of Police
Committee on Police Ethics 2000



Community Policing

Community Policing is based on the premise that both the police and their community must work together to identify, prioritize & solve contemporary problems such as:

- Crime,
- The fear of crime,
- Illegal drugs,
- Social and physical disorder, and
- Overall neighborhood decay

Community Policing requires a department-wide commitment in which members of the Police Department work collaboratively with individuals, neighborhood groups, businesses, government and other public safety agencies to identify, discuss and address community concerns. We will focus on proactive policing, educational efforts, and other proven techniques in identifying and addressing the root causes of problems that negatively impact the quality of life for our citizens, with the goal of improving the overall quality of life in the area.



COMMUNITY COOKOUT

The Lexington Police Department and the Community Watch Program hosted a "Community Cookout" at Richardson Park on June 17, 2015. The event featured food, music, prizes, games, kids bounce house, and a free throw competition. The event was well attended with over three-hundred people participating. This was a great way to build on the successful partnership with our community. Members of the police department worked diligently to make the cookout a memorable event in the City and they should be proud of their hard work and dedication to our community.



NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

National Night Out

Members of the LPD partnered with the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office in the 2015 National Night Out at Rockbridge County High School. National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness and strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. Community members come out together to promote awareness, safety and neighborhood unity. Families and Officers enjoyed free food/refreshments and lots of activities for the kids.



YOUTH INITIATIVES



THE JUNIOR POLICE ACADEMY

The Lexington Police Department partnered with the Lylburn Downing Middle School (LDMS) and provided a Junior Police Academy Program (JPA) to eighth graders in the fall of 2015. The program will be continued again in 2016. The JPA is held each Tuesday and Thursday at LDMS during the fall semester. Students are provided with an inside look at the Law Enforcement Profession. The students, officially referred to as *Junior Cadets*, receive in class instruction, informative demonstrations, and participate in mock training exercises. Law Enforcement Instructors follow a philosophy that centers on a proactive and participatory approach to a variety of training topics. Junior Cadets received instruction on duties of a Police Officer, Investigative Procedures, Drug Awareness, Forensic Investigations, SWAT, and K-9 operations. In addition, emphasis on leadership traits and citizenship were introduced and discussed within the training curriculum. The majority of the courses are scenario-based and require the use of actual police equipment. The program is designed to be both a challenging and rewarding experience for the Junior Cadets. Law Enforcement Officers from the region, including the Virginia Military Institute Police Department, Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office, and the Lexington Police Department volunteer their time as instructors for the JPA.

JPA

Lexington Police Department
Junior Police Academy





High School Internship Program

Lexington Police Department Internships are open to rising seniors at Rockbridge County High School and Parry McCluer High School. The LPD High School Internship Program was developed to provide students an opportunity to work with our professional staff and introduce them to the many aspects of law enforcement and enhance their understanding of the criminal justice system. In addition, students are introduced to the various career opportunities that await them should they decide to choose law enforcement as a career. Interns are asked to work a set number of hours per week; however, the schedule is flexible, enabling students to maximize the experience. Interns are usually assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division and spend time in other units in the department based on their interests and the amount of work available. This past summer we hosted one intern for an extended period in the LPD Internship Program. Rising Senior, Laura Ramirez was exposed to many exciting opportunities such as Officer Ride-alongs, Forensics Training, Tactical Operations, Crime Scene Investigation, etc.



Interns perform a variety of jobs including:

- Data entry
- Crime scene diagrams
- Computer programming
- Dispatch Operations
- Assisting in investigations
- Ride-a-long with Officers

Lexington Police Department Command Staff Officers



Chief A.S. Thomas



Captain M.E. Riley



Lieutenant M.R. Frost

Lexington Police Department Patrol Division (Daylight Shift)

A Shift

First Sergeant Scott Fitzgerald has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2004. First Sergeant Scott Fitzgerald is a lifelong resident of Lexington and Rockbridge County. He graduated from James Madison University with a Bachelor of Science Degree with Academic Honors. Sergeant Fitzgerald was promoted to Master Patrolman in 2009 and later promoted to Sergeant in 2010.

During his career with the LPD he has received several departmental Commendations for community policing, outstanding teamwork, and dedication to duty. Sergeant Fitzgerald was awarded the LPD Meritorious Service Medal in 2012.

Sergeant Fitzgerald was directly involved in the implementation of the Lexington Police Department's Taser program. He is also actively involved in the bike patrol, project lifesaver, amber alert/missing children, and several of the departments training programs as an instructor.



B Shift

Sergeant Michael E. Huffman Jr. has served with the Lexington Police Department since 1994. He attended Dabney S. Lancaster Community College graduating with an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice.

In 2013, Sgt. Huffman graduated from the Virginia Tech Institute for Leadership in Changing Times. He is the Lead Firearms Instructor for the department and serves as is the DMV Grant Coordinator for the City of Lexington.

Sergeant Huffman has received several awards during his tenure with the LPD to include the Meritorious Service Medal, Life Saving Medal, Career Service ribbon, Academic Achievement Ribbon with Bronze Star, Advanced Administrative Training Ribbon, Firearms Proficiency Ribbon and the Accreditation Ribbon.



Lexington Police Department Patrol Division (Midnight Shift)

A Shift

Sergeant Cherie Padgett has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2005. In 2007 she was selected as the Accreditation Manager and was also assigned as a Narcotics Investigator. In 2010, she was transferred to the Criminal Investigations Division, and promoted to Sergeant in 2014.

Sergeant Padgett has been assigned a myriad of additional responsibilities including: Public Information Officer, Junior Police Academy Coordinator, and Coordinator for the High School Internship Program. Sergeant Padgett also serves as a DCJS Certified General Instructor and is a member of the Southwest Crime Prevention Association and Honorary Member of the Administration of Justice Club at Dabney S, Lancaster Community College.

Sergeant Padgett is a two-time recipient of the Lexington Police Department Distinguished Service Medal and in July 2013 she was recognized by the Lexington Lions Club as the Officer of The Year and received the John Swink Award for outstanding service to the citizens of Lexington and Rockbridge County.



B Shift

Sergeant Ron Condry has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2006. In 2010, he was promoted to the rank of Corporal and then again to the rank of Sergeant in 2015.

During his time as a Corporal, he functioned as a state certified Field Training Officer with the duties of training new Officers. He also took on the responsibility of being a general instructor teaching various topics to recruit Officers at the basic police academy. He excelled in the area of driving under the influence detection and prosecution and was awarded the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Award for 7 consecutive years. He also became an instructor for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and completed the Virginia Police Chief's Foundation Institute for Leadership in Changing Times course.



Since his promotion to Sergeant, he has supervised one of the department's night shifts and continues to be a driving force in teaching and mentoring new Officers in DUI enforcement. During his time at the department, he has been awarded several departmental awards to include the Distinguished Service Medal (2 awards), the Life Saving Medal, the Career Service ribbon, the Advanced Administrative Training ribbon, the Firearms Proficiency ribbon and the Accreditation ribbon.

The LPD is commanded by the Chief of Police. During calendar year 2015, the Lexington Police Department (LPD) was authorized 18 sworn police officers and 5 civilian personnel to provide law enforcement services to the City of Lexington, Virginia.

Administration

The Deputy Chief (Captain) serves as the Commander of the Administrative Division and oversees the Records and Evidence Sections, Criminal Investigations, Narcotics Investigations, and the Professional Standards Unit.

Investigations

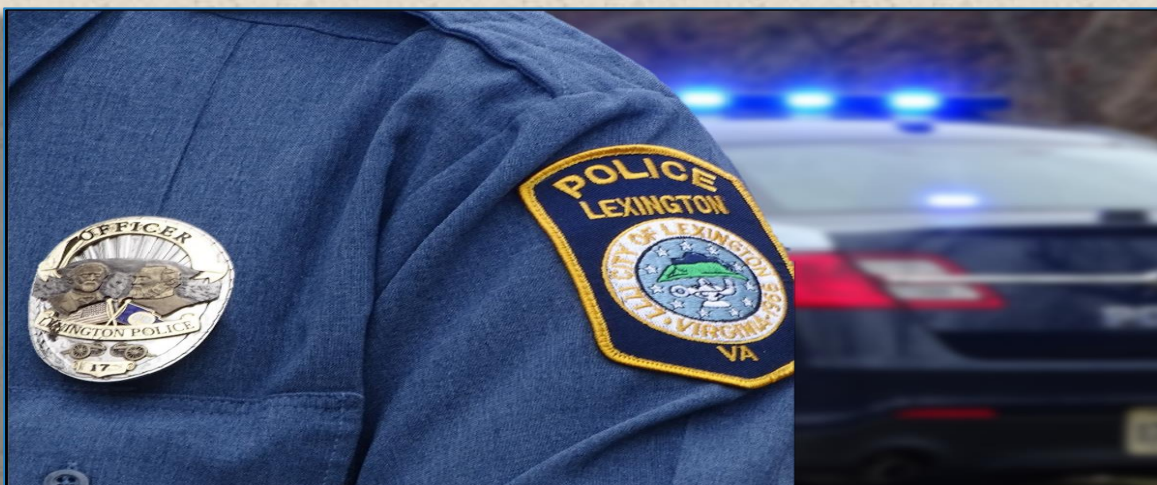
The Criminal Investigations Division (CID) Detective is assigned to the investigation of serious felony and misdemeanor offenses that occur in the City. The Detective is typically assigned to follow-up on incidents initially reported to patrol officers; detectives have the training and the necessary time to more thoroughly investigate reported criminal incidents in order to identify suspects, affect arrests, and successfully prosecute cases.

The Narcotics Detective is assigned primarily to major drug investigations and intelligence gathering efforts on individuals and groups involved in the distribution and trafficking of illicit narcotics in Lexington and Rockbridge County.

Patrol Division

The Lieutenant serves as the Commander of the Patrol Division and also oversees the Animal Control and Parking Enforcement Unit.

A Sergeant is assigned to command each of the four patrol shifts. The Sergeant is responsible for the leadership of the shift to ensure that goals and objectives are accomplished. Each patrol Sergeant is assigned a Corporal and Patrol Officers.



Special Enforcement Unit

The Lexington Police Department is responsible for Parking Enforcement and Animal Control Services. Special Enforcement Officers are equipped and trained to enforce the City parking and animal ordinances.

There are many domestic animal owners residing in our City. It is the goal of the Police Department's Special Enforcement Unit to ensure that these animals are protected from abuse, confined to the owner's property, and to protect our citizens from animal attacks and destruction of their property.

Dogs that run at large are apprehended and housed at the Rockbridge SPCA. Investigations are conducted in cases where animals are suspected of being abused. Reports of animal bites are thoroughly investigated, reported to the proper health officials and the suspected animals are placed in quarantine.

Lexington Police Department

Authorized Staffing

Sworn Police Officers

Administrative Staff

Chief of Police	1	Executive Secretary	1
Captain	1	Records/Evidence Clerk	1
Lieutenant	1	School Crossing Guard	3
First Sergeant	1		
Sergeant	3	<i>Subtotal - Civilian</i>	5
Corporal	4		
Patrol Officer	4		
Investigator	2		
Special Enforcement Officer	1		
<i>Subtotal - Sworn</i>	18	Total Authorized Personnel	23



Lexington Police Department Roster

ADMINISTRATION

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Serving Since</u>
Alfred S. Thomas, Jr.	Chief of Police	04/05/2010
Mark E. Riley	Captain	08/16/1993
Michael R. Frost	Lieutenant	04/28/2004
J. Timothy Ziegler	Police Chaplain	02/16/2015
Vicki H. Pickle	Executive Secretary	05/28/2014
Lori N. Condry	Records/Evidence Clerk	06/03/2015

INVESTIGATIONS

Robert E. Smith	Investigator	12/15/2009
Gregory W. Gardner	Narcotics Investigator	06/24/2008

PATROL

M. Scott Fitzgerald	First Sergeant	02/02/2004
Michael E. Huffman	Sergeant	12/28/1994
Cherie H. Padgett	Sergeant	07/04/2005
Ronald D. Condry	Sergeant	01/03/2006
Nathan B. Kesterson	Corporal	02/02/2004
Jessica A. Burks	Corporal	06/08/2011
Aaron W. Britton	Corporal	10/01/2014
Elizabeth A. Stewart	Corporal	08/19/2013
Thomas K. Mohler	Police Officer	01/28/2013
Keith A. Musser	Police Officer	03/16/2015
Joshua T. Oakley	Police Officer	05/07/2015
Zachary S. Bright	Police Officer	06/03/2015

SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT

Matthew D. Lombardi	Special Enforcement Officer	06/09/2014
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SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS

Bruce M. Beard, Jr.	Crossing Guard	11/26/2007
Sarah W. Argenbright	Crossing Guard	09/01/2009
DeLois A. Dock	Crossing Guard	05/11/2015



Employee Recognition

Lori Condry was hired as the new Records/Evidence Clerk in June 2015. Lori has prior experience with Central Dispatch and worked with the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office.

Retirements

Vanessa Tomlin

Vanessa Tomlin, Records/Evidence Clerk retired on June 19, 2015. Vanessa served the City well since 2001. We had a retirement luncheon for Vanessa at the police department and presented her retirement plaque.

Alfonzo Miller

Captain Miller's last work day was August 11, 2015, his official retirement date was September 30, 2015. We had a retirement luncheon for Bucky at the police department and presented him with his retirement badge, engraved service weapon along with a retirement plaque and other gifts from the officers. Captain Miller was also featured in the August edition of the Lexington Police Foundation Newsletter, which had a number of testimonials honoring his 30 plus years of service.

Swearing In Ceremony



Keith Musser began his employment with the Lexington Police Department in March 2015. He obtained his law enforcement certification from the New River Criminal Justice Training Academy and after successfully completing his Field Officer Training program, was assigned to solo patrol in May 2015. Prior to beginning his career with the Lexington Police Department, Keith worked as a substitute teacher for the criminal justice program at Carroll County High School.

Josh Oakley graduated from the New River Criminal Justice Training Academy in June 2015. After successfully completing his 12-week Field Officer Training program, Josh was assigned to solo patrol in September. Prior to beginning his career with the Lexington Police Department, Josh obtained his BS in Criminal Justice at Radford University. Josh previously interned with the Radford City Police Department while earning his degree at Radford.



Zach Bright graduated from the Cardinal Criminal Justice Academy in October 2015. After successfully completing his Field Officer Training program, Zach was assigned to solo patrol in January 2016. Prior to beginning his career with the Lexington Police Department, Zach obtained his BS in History at Liberty University. Zach also proudly serves in the National Guard, completing his Basic Training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in March 13, 2015.

Promotions

Lexington Police Department staff earned multiple promotions in 2015, including: Captain, Lieutenant, First Sergeant, Sergeant, and Corporal. Congrats to Captain Riley, Lieutenant Frost, First Sergeant Fitzgerald, Sergeant Condry, and Corporal Stewart on their promotions.



Veterans Day in Lexington



Crime in Lexington - 2015

One of the hallmarks that most governments and citizens and many prospective residents look to in evaluating a community is crime and the perception of crime among residents. The Lexington Police Department recognizes that crime control is one of our critical missions.

The Lexington Police Department's commitment to a community policing organizational philosophy is considered to be one of the factors responsible for the reduction of crime that has occurred in the City of Lexington.

Although there are many factors that influence the reporting of crime, it is generally accepted that only a modest percentage of crime is ever reported to the police. The law enforcement community's primary objective with regards to the collection and analysis of crime data is to provide a reliable set of crime statistics for criminal justice and law enforcement administration, operation and management, as well as providing an objective measurement and indication of the overall level of crime.

Law Enforcement Statistics Police Related Assistance

LPD Stats

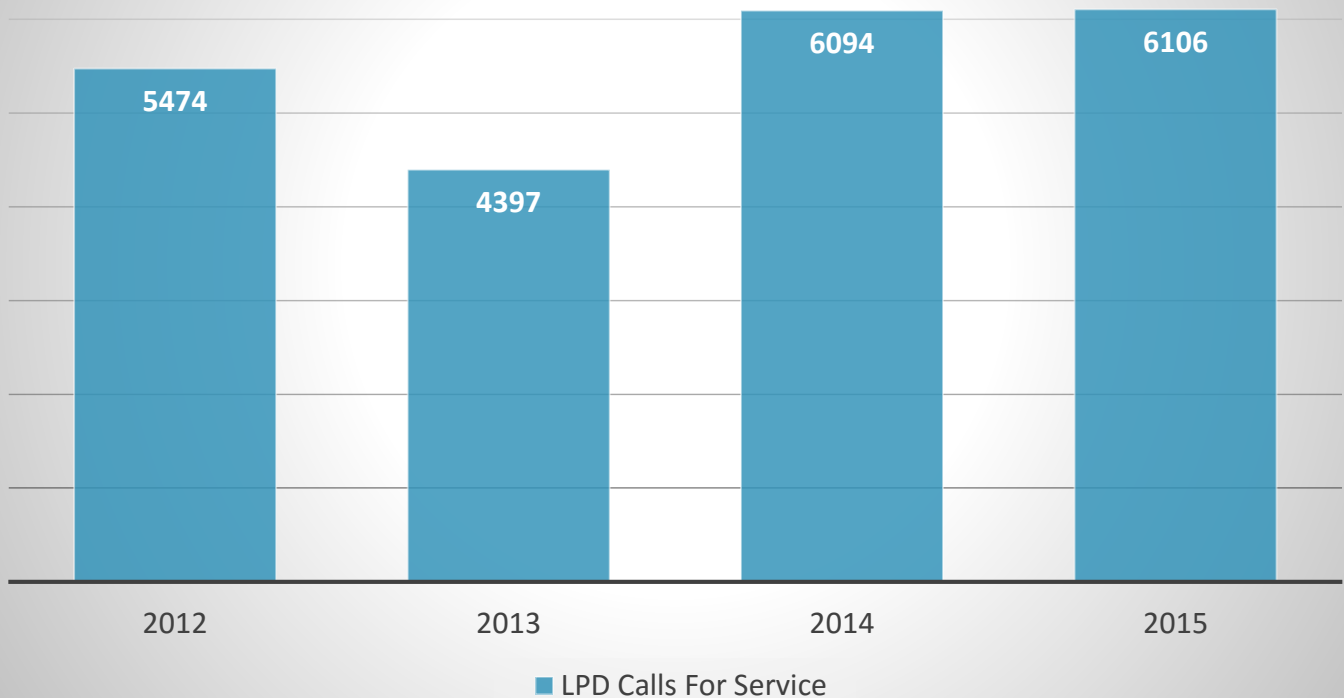
The Lexington Police Department Crime Comparison Stats reflects an *increase* in Felony Arrests, Drunk in Public, Driving Under the Influence, Possession of Marijuana, and Speeding during 2015 as compared to 2014:

The Lexington Police Department Crime Comparison Stats reflects *decreases* in Misdemeanor Arrests and Overtime Parking offenses during 2015 as compared to 2014:

Crime Stat Comparison

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Misdemeanor Arrests	510	315	307
Felony Arrests	107	24	40
Drunk In Public	33	26	57
Driving Under Influence	25	19	33
Speeding	214	138	254
Overtime Parking	810	880	717
Marijuana Possession	41	12	14

LPD Calls For Service





Professional Standards

Department Accreditation

The Lexington Police Department has maintained accredited status as a means of ensuring effective service delivery to the citizens of Lexington through voluntary adherence to state standards in furtherance of agency mission and goals. The department takes pride in benchmarking its policies and procedures against state best practices for law enforcement agencies.

Accreditation is the on-going process whereby agencies evaluate policy and procedure against established criteria, and have compliance with that criteria verified by an independent and authoritative body. The criteria, or standards, are policy development guidelines that represent a level of quality service delivery. The true indicator of compliance, however, lies with an evaluation by trained, independent professional peers.

In January 2015, a team of State Assessors examined all aspects of the Lexington Police Department's policy and procedures, management, operations and support services and on February 17, 2015, the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) once again officially certified the Lexington Police Department as an accredited agency.

The Accreditation Manager for the Lexington Police Department is Detective Robert Smith. He may be reached at (540) 462-3719 or rsmith@lexingtonva.gov for information regarding the agency's accreditation. Additional information is also available on the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services website at <http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/accred/>.

Complaint Investigation

The Lexington Police Department investigates all complaints made by citizens; complaints are typically deemed to be either an allegation of misconduct or a performance demeanor complaint.

Allegations of misconduct are complaints that allege corruption, misuse of force, violation of the law, violation of an individual's civil rights or a serious breach of department policy or employee rules of conduct.

Performance demeanor complaints typically allege an inappropriate action or response by an employee, improper operation of a police vehicle, violation of a department policy or employee rules of conduct or any other act or failure to act that does not rise to the level of an allegation of misconduct.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, each complaint is deemed to be one of the following:

Sustained - findings indicate there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation or complaint

Non-Sustained - findings indicate there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation or complaint

Exonerated - findings indicate there is sufficient evidence to prove the incident occurred, but the actions or demeanor of the employee was proper, lawful and/or within policy

Unfounded - findings indicate there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation or complaint did not occur or was demonstrably untrue or false

Policy Failure - findings indicate there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation or complaint occurred, but the actions of the employee were within LPD policy when the incident took place. This finding indicates the policy is faulty and in need of review or revision.

During 2015 there was one (1) complaint (allegation of misconduct) filed against a police department employee.

Findings for this was:

- 1 Allegation of misconduct was deemed "Sustained"
- No employee grievances were filed in 2015.

Use of Force

Lexington Police Department policy dictates that police officers will use only that force necessary to protect life and affect lawful objectives. In addition to the use of physical force, police officers in Lexington are equipped with and trained to use Oleoresin Capsicum ("OC") chemical spray, batons, Tasers and, when necessary, their firearms when performing their lawful duties.

Each member of the uniformed patrol staff is outfitted with the X26 Taser. The X26 Taser is a Less Lethal Electronic Control Device (ECD). Electronic Control Devices (ECD) use propelled wires or direct contact to conduct energy to affect the sensory and motor functions of the nervous system. The full implementation of the Taser is expected to significantly reduce the likelihood of both citizen and officer injury in the future due to a reduction in physical contact with combative individuals.

RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE REVIEW

During 2015, there were a total of 4 incidents that resulted in applications of force by individual officers. Every incident in which force is used by a Lexington Police Officer is thoroughly investigated and documented by supervisory staff and is reviewed through the department's chain-of-command. Supervisory staff monitors officer activity to identify patterns and to provide for consistent, proactive intervention when appropriate.

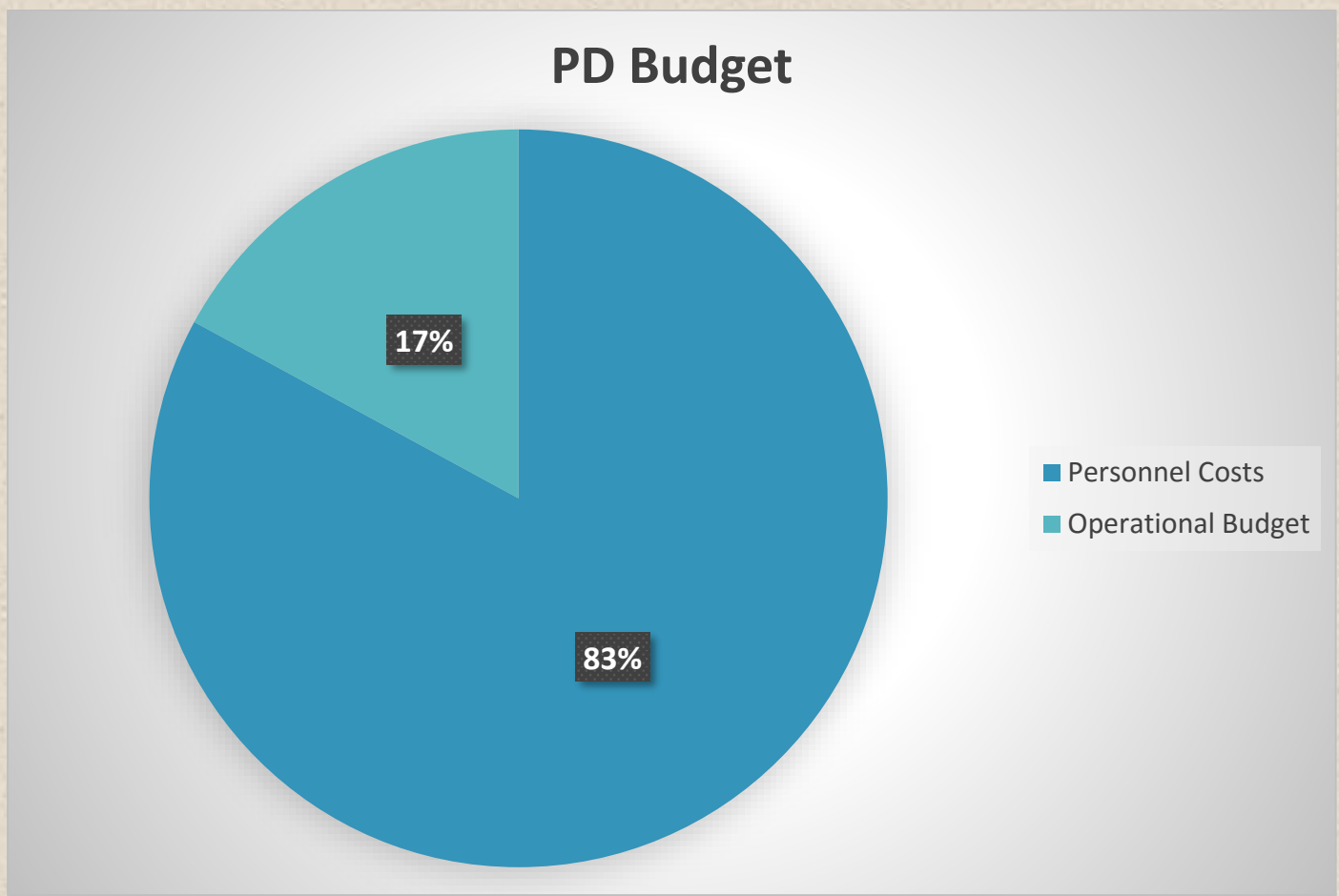
STATISTICAL SUMMARY

During 2015, officers with the Lexington Police Department utilized force in a total of 4 of the 347 arrests made; this translates to officers having used force in approximately 1.1 percent of arrests made.

Budget Information

The Lexington Police Department budget is one component of the budget for the City of Lexington and is based on the City's fiscal year from July 1 - June 30. The Police Department budget is actually composed primarily of two component budgets - the Police Department and the Special Enforcement Unit.

The total police department budget for FY-16 was \$1,741,344. Of this amount, \$1,444,074 was committed to personnel costs for salaries and benefits, leaving only \$297,270 (17%), for operational costs. As shown in the chart below, personnel costs constituted approximately 83% of the police department budget for FY-16.



LPD Operational Budget

FY-13	FY-14	FY-15	FY-16
\$300,111	\$309,150	\$313,420	\$297,270



Notable Accomplishments

On December 25, 2015 Corporal Elizabeth Stewart organized the second annual Department Christmas Card Campaign. Members of the Lexington Police Department hand-delivered 300 Christmas cards to residents in assisted living facilities throughout the City. Each card was personalized with the resident's name and room number and was signed by every member of the Lexington Police Department. This endeavor received a number of compliments from members of our community.

Sergeants Padgett and Condry graduated from the Institute for Leadership in Changing Times (ILTC). The ILCT is an intensive nine-day leadership education program conducted in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). This program is designed for individuals who have completed a First Line Supervisors course and who currently serve in or are soon to be promoted to middle-management positions within their agencies. The curriculum is education-based and focused on the study of leadership at an intermediate level.

Lexington was named the 5th Safest City in Virginia by SafeWise.com. SafeWise used FBI Crime Report data as the backbone of their report and paired it with their own research. They then narrowed down the options to cities with a population of 3,000 or above. They analyze the number of Violent Crimes, consisting of aggravated assault, forcible rape, murder, and robbery, as well as Property Crimes, consisting of arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. They then calculate the chance of these crimes happening out of one thousand in order to level the playing field for cities of varying populations. Their purpose was to get at the heart of the issue, and provide the information to answer this important question: "What is the chance of crime happening to me or my loved ones?"

